

Message Text

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UNCLAS MONTREAL 869

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TAGS: PINT, CA
SUBJ: CONFLICTING VIEWS ON FRENCH MANAGEMENT RATIOS

1. ISSUE OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FRENCH IN
BUSINESS COMMUNITY DREW SHARPLY CONTRASTING TREATMENT YESTERDAY.

2. MINISTER LAURIN, IN SPEECH TO MONTREAL PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION,
RAISED SPECTRE OF "SOCIAL EXPLOSION" SIMILAR TO THE FLQ CRISIS OF
1970 UNLESS LANGUAGE LEGISLATION IS RIGIDLY ENFORCED, ACCUSING
ANGLOPHONE BUSINESS COMMUNITY OF "SYSTEMATICALLY EXCLUDING
FRANCOPHONES FROM HEAD OFFICES AND HIGHER ADMINISTRATIVE
POSITIONS." CLAIMED STUDIES SHOW ANGLOPHONES ARE "OVER-REPRESENT-
ED" IN HIGHER POSITIONS WHILE FRANCOPHONES HANDLE MOST OF MENIAL
JOBS.

3. AT SAME TIME, BERNARD FINESTONE, PRESIDENT OF MONTREAL BOARD
OF TRADE, WAS TELLING NEWS CONFERENCE THAT BOARD SURVEY SHOWS
NUMBER OF MANAGERS AND TOP EXECUTIVES WHOSE MOTHER TONGUE IS
FRENCH HAS INCREASED RAPIDLY IN LAST TEN YEARS. THIRTY-THREE OF
100 FIRMS SURVEYED RESPONDED, WHICH FINESTONE CLAIMED ARE
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOARD'S MEMBERS. AMONG SURVEY FINDINGS:
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(A) FRANCOPHONE TOP EXECUTIVES IN THESE FIRMS HAVE TREBLED
(32 TO 98) SINCE 1967 WHILE THE NUMBER OF JOBS GREW ONLY
22 PERCENT IN SAME PERIOD; (B) MIDDLE MANAGEMENT JOBS HELD BY
FRANCOPHONES GREW TO 505 FROM 249 TEN YEARS AGO (AN INCREASE OF
103 PERCENT) ALTHOUGH NUMBER OF SUCH POSTS INCREASED ONLY
NINE PERCENT; (C) FRANCOPHONES NEW CONSTITUTE 25 PERCENT OF
TOP MANAGERS VIS-A-VIS TEN PERCENT EARLIER; (D) MIDDLE MANAGERS

NOW CONSTITUTE 33 PERCENT AS AGAINST 18 PERCENT TEN YEARS AGO.

4. FINESTONE'S THESIS IS THAT THE COERCION IN BILL ONE IS UNNECESSARY. "THE BATTLE IS BEING WON ... AND TO FIGHT A BATTLE THAT HAS BEEN WON IS TO LOSE CASUALTIES FOR NOTHING. THE CASUALTIES IN THIS CASE ARE JOBS."

5. CONTRASTING POSITIONS DREW FRONT PAGE ATTENTION FROM ANGLOPHONE PRESS. LE DEVOIR FRONT-PAGED FINESTONE STORY AND, IN INSIDE MENTION OF LAURIN SPEECH, IGNORED STATEMENTS PARALLELING PRESENT SITUATION TO OCTOBER 1970 CRISIS. LA PRESSE PUT BOTH STORIES ON INSIDE PAGES, BUT HEADLINED THAT ASPECT OF LAURIN ADDRESS.

6. COMMENT: QUESTION OF "NEED" FOR MORE STRINGENT FACETS OF POLICY FOR LANGUAGE OF BUSINESS BASIC NOT ONLY TO ULTIMATE FORM OF BILL ONE BUT ALSO BUSINESS DECISIONS RE STAYING OR MOVING TO OTHER PROVINCES. UNFORTUNATELY FOR ALL CONCERNED, ISSUE NO MORE LIKELY TO BE RESOLVED BY THIS POINT-COUNTERPOINT THAN QUESTION OF WHETHER QUEBEC HAS GAINED OR LOST FINANCIALLY FROM FEDERALISM. MORE TO POINT, LAURIN USE OF EMOTIONALLY CHARGED TERMS SERVES ONLY TO EXACERBATE CONCERNS OF THOSE WHO FEEL THAT A PSYCHIATRIST, OF ALL PEOPLE, SHOULD RECOGNIZE THE EFFECT THEY MAY HAVE.
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